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Clarke, J. F.

BULGARIA  
AND  
SALONICA IN MACEDONIA

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American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions  
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## BULGARIA.

BY REV. JAMES F. CLARKE, D.D., OF SAMOKOV.

THE story of Bulgaria is full of interest, both because of the character of the people and the position in Europe which they occupy. The people are Slaves, as are also the Russians, Servians, Bohemians, etc. They have just reason to be proud of their ancestors from the seventh to the fourteenth century, and they love to repeat in their families the names of Asparuch, Krum, Simeon, and Boris, each of whom had a glory of his own in war or the arts of peace. Five hundred years of servitude to the Turks did not crush out their innate nobleness of character, and in 1879 Alexander found a capable and patriotic race to welcome him enthusiastically as their first prince for centuries.

This prince, though at first making serious mistakes, afterwards greatly endeared himself to his people, whom he ardently loved. Afterwards, when he thought it would be for the good of Bulgaria, he abdicated his throne and weeping crowds filled the streets of his capital as he was leaving it. Prince Ferdinand, the successor of Alexander, has not found his path wholly a pleasant one.

King Boris accepted Christianity in 862 A.D., and so his people have since been a nominally Christian nation. Though members of the Greek church, they hate the word Greek, because the ecclesiastics of that church have, to a great degree, forced out the use of the Bulgarian language, requiring them to use the Greek language in their churches and schools in order that in any future division of the country Greece may secure the land. The city of Philippopolis, many other places in Roumelia, and almost the whole of Macedonia were until recently so controlled that anyone seeking to introduce the use of the Bulgarian language in the schools or churches would be accused to the Turks of treason.

These circumstances led to the eager purchase of thousands of the Bulgarian Testament, published about the year 1856. They were bought simply because "they were in the mother tongue and sweet to the ear" of patriotic Bulgarians, but this desire for the Testament led American Christians to think that there was a call for prompt and efficient Christian work, and so the American Board, having a mission station at Adrianople, invited the Methodist Board to join them in the effort to preach the gospel in Bulgaria, and these two missions have continued their work in essential harmony — the American Board at the south of the Balkans and the Methodists north of that range. About the year 1858 Miss Ann Marston, of England, gave £300 to each Board for the education of Bulgarian boys and girls. Mission schools were opened for the former in Philippopolis, and the latter in Eski Zaghra. God, in his providence, seemed to have specially prepared a capable, efficient, loving, Christian Bohemian lady to teach in the Girls' School, and a wonderful revival brought many to Christ. Among those reached was a little girl in the school to whom a young man said: "You don't understand these Protestants; they are deceiving you." Looking him full in the face with her bright eyes, the girl answered: "When you have tasted an apple, do you ask if it is sweet? We have tasted of this gospel and we know its sweetness." Another girl, Marika, was confined in the house by her mother, but escaping through a window, she returned to those who had led her to Jesus, nor did the

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mob of women, who broke many of the windows where she was, frighten her away. Eleuka was told by her stepmother to leave the Protestants or her home. She left her home and never again entered it.

Nacho, after attending the Sabbath services, was led to Christ, and at once restored to his former partner \$880, — equal to the total property of many business men in his city at that time, — money secretly overcharged and pocketed while making purchases in Constantinople. The wife of Nacho also left him with his two much loved children, and as he could not secure their return, he entered the school to prepare himself for Christian work. All these three, after useful lives of earnest, active piety, have passed on to heavenly service. From a similar revival in the Boys' School in Philippopolis have come some of the best Christian workers.

Twenty-five years ago both these institutions were transferred to Samokov, where the Girls' School has had a wide influence, supplying Bible-women, teachers, and wives of Christian workers and others. The Boys' School, now developed into the Collegiate and Theological Institute, has furnished all but one of the liberally educated preachers, and been second to no other agency, except the direct preaching of the gospel, in spreading evangelical Christianity in Bulgaria.

An industrial department connected with this institution was started in 1871, doing chiefly printing and cabinet work, which has enabled the trustees to reduce the number receiving full stipends (\$35 a year, nearly the cost of board) from about thirty to five, thus saving missionary funds and developing personal self-dependence. It is strongly felt that those not ready to help themselves will not have a sincere desire to aid others in either temporal or spiritual things. This department much needs a capable, trained overseer, who would not only carry on the work more efficiently than is now possible, but would also relieve in some good degree the missionaries from a form of labor for which they have had no previous training.

In God's providence missionaries have been able to relieve much suffering in times of war and massacres. In 1876, of over 11,000 houses in fifty-six places, thirty-two of which were visited by a missionary, more than half were destroyed by the Turks, and about 5,000 persons were killed. This does not include all in Bulgaria or any from Macedonia. During the years 1876-78 missionaries, chiefly with funds from England, aided many thousands of people, including the building of two hospitals and the distribution of food, clothing, and implements needed to restore their homes and farms. Often the sympathy and encouragement given were of more value than the material aid. In one case unwearied effort and exposures brought on repeated sickness, which at one time was nearly fatal.

The annual statistics of the European Turkey Mission for 1894 give 24 American missionaries, male and female, 10 pastors and 13 other preachers, besides 78 other Bulgarian workers, 42 regular preaching places, with an average congregation of 2,278, and of Sabbath-school scholars, 1,886; a total church membership, from the first, of 1,436, of whom 952 are now living, and contributions amounting to \$7,465.71, which, divided by the average attendance, gives \$3.23 for each person, or, by the church membership, \$7.84 each.

The preaching of the gospel has at times met with vigorous opposition. Mis-

sionaries were at first everywhere received with cordiality, but when a monk married and fled to the missionaries for protection, the steps they felt obliged to take led to the exclusion of thousands of evangelical books from schools and homes. It was a trying time, yet it resulted in a closer study of the Word of God. In Yambul, boys stoned a building where a few determined followers were worshipping, but they sat between the windows and continued their songs and service. In Panagureshte missionaries and other workers were threatened, stoned, and treated with all the contumely which seemed possible under the Turkish rule. In both these villages there are now vigorous churches with earnest, capable pastors, and the gospel has a positive influence throughout the place.

In Stope a priest was determined to prevent the increase of the little evangelical circle, and vigorously persecuted them. A missionary was three times violently driven from the place, once being taken from his bed by his head and heels and sent off in derision with a band and a bagpipe; at another time he was choked, thrown to the ground and kicked, and a third time ordered to leave the place. But the governor, who had said to the missionary, "Go and do your work and I will be answerable for you with my head," sent a policeman, who met him near the village and went back with him to the head man and said: "The governor sent me to tell you not only not to hinder this man but even to help him." Last spring a Bible-woman went to this village, found her way freely to the homes, was visited by many of the women and girls, the priest himself at last coming for a long serious talk, and many wept when she was obliged to leave.

We give a brief sketch of the work at the different stations.

In Constantinople "Father Riggs," now eighty-five years of age, and Mr. Thomson are connected with the publishing department, which has printed thousands of copies of the Scriptures and millions of pages of books, tracts, and of the weekly and monthly *Morning Star*, which have permeated Bulgaria and Macedonia.

In Philippopolis Mr. Marsh is working fraternally and earnestly, with many Bulgarian pastors in the city and elsewhere, to bring souls to Christ and build them up in a vigorous Christian life, and is now seeking means to build a much needed and larger church edifice.

In Samokov Messrs. Haskell, Kingsbury, and the Clarkes, father and son, with a few capable Bulgarian associates, are actively pushing a positively Christian education for young men and women, and at the same time reaching out as far as possible in the regions about them with the gospel message.

In Monastir Messrs. Bond and Baird, with Miss Cole and others, are doing much for the education of girls, but have been specially blessed in preaching the gospel in other towns, where live and growing churches have been formed. They are having a positive influence among a noble race in Albania.

Salonica, a former station of the American Board, now become an important centre because of railroads recently built, was last fall reoccupied by Messrs. House and E. B. Haskell. Some fifteen out-stations from the Monastir and Samokov fields have been transferred to this station, and by means of constant tours, both of missionaries and Bulgarians, new places have been opened, and there is a promising future.

Two other agencies should be mentioned in this connection. The Bulgarian

Evangelical Society was formed twenty-one years ago, by Bulgarians, some of whom had tasted the joy of giving for Christ during the revival in the Boys' School, ten years before. From the capital, Sophia, it is extending its efforts in all directions, and is uniting Christians in the work of Christ. The Temperance Union, composed of fifteen societies, of which Professor Shopoff, commissioner to the World's Fair, is now president, is doing a much needed and good work against intemperance.

This brief outline of Christian work in Bulgaria implies a much broader unseen influence. Parents, teachers, preachers, and other Christians are working together for the saving of souls in many places. The 484 church members who have died and the 952 now living would average well with those in our own land. Many thousands besides, throughout Bulgaria, Macedonia, and Albania, are convinced of the truth of Christianity. One high in office in Bulgaria said to a friend: "Do you think me so foolish as not to see that the evangelical faith is the true one? I would myself follow if my people would go with me." A teacher in Macedonia said plainly to some of his older pupils: "The evangelical religion is the true one. It is too hard for me, but I advise you to follow it if you can." A Bulgarian bishop said to me: "We are afraid of the Greeks and the Catholics, but not of the Protestants"; and his conduct proved that he was sincere.

While infidelity, licentiousness, intemperance, and fashion are undermining the character of a noble race, many sincere patriots among them are looking to the gospel of Christ for the uplifting of their people. In this work American missionaries have gained the confidence of the best of the leaders, and we earnestly ask for all the workers the active sympathy of American Christians.

## SALONICA IN MACEDONIA.

BY REV. J. HENRY HOUSE, D.D., OF SALONICA.

SALONICA, recently reoccupied by the American Board as a centre for work among the Bulgarians of Macedonia, is the Thessalonica of the Acts of the



THE ROTUNDA, OR ST. GEORGE'S MOSQUE, AT SALONICA.

Apostles. It is a city of great antiquity and is interesting alike for the memories which it awakens of ancient Greece and Rome, and for what it recalls of the history of the Apostle Paul and the Christian church since his day.

## ITS ANTIQUITIES.

The view of the city given on a following page will enable the reader to form a good idea of the city as it now is. The picturesque Genoese tower, which

is seen at the left, reminds those who have visited Constantinople of similar towers in that city. The old walls, which are still in very good preservation on three sides of the city, have been pulled down to the seaward and to the south-east of the city, and so are not distinctly seen in the picture. The minaret with a ruined top, near the centre, marks the site of the mosque of St. Sophia, which was greatly injured by a great fire that occurred a few years ago. It was formerly a Christian church and was built in the reign of Justinian by the same architect that built St. Sophia in Constantinople. The great square building that is seen a little farther to the right, but still near the centre, is the fine new government building. The prominent round building, with its minaret, at the left of the picture, is the Rotunda, or St. George's Mosque, as it is also called. This is supposed by some to have been built by Trajan after the pattern of the Pantheon at Rome. It was the old Metropolitan Church in which the Emperor Theodosius the Great was baptized. Turning the eye back again a little to the right, you will see the Mosque of St. Demetrius, who is more revered to-day in Salonica than Paul himself. The tomb of the martyr, for such he was, is still pointed out to the visitor and is said to be honored even by the Turks, who open the mosque once a year to Christian pilgrims who flock in great numbers to the shrine of the saint. There is a tradition that this mosque is built near the site of the synagogue where Paul preached.

The Rotunda, a picture of which is seen on the preceding page, is a building of much historical interest. Its walls are twenty or twenty-two feet thick. It contains some very curious mosaics of waterfowl which perhaps are very ancient, and yet they are as bright and fresh to-day as though they were finished but yesterday. Another mosque, called Eski Djuma, or "Old Friday," is probably the most ancient building of the city. It was not only at one time a Christian church, but before the Christian era it was a temple of Venus. Its very name, "Old Friday," preserves this tradition, as Friday (*Vendredi* in the French) is the Day of Venus. In this mosque there are some very ancient Ionic columns and two fine rows of columns with Corinthian capitals. These shafts have been painted dark green, and the capitals flesh color, perhaps in honor of a visit of the Sultan to the city some years since! All these columns doubtless belonged to the temple of Venus.

This city was, until within a few years, the possessor of two triumphal arches erected in the time of the Roman emperors. The oldest one, which spanned the Via Egnatia at the western extremity of the city, without doubt existed in Paul's time, and he probably passed under it in going out of the city to Berea. Upon this column was the inscription referring to the "Politarchs," which is exactly the name (a strange one to scholars) which Luke gives to the rulers of the city in the Acts. This arch was pulled down to furnish materials for the quay. The larger part of the stone upon which was found the inscription has been placed in the British Museum.

The Arch of Constantine, of which we give a picture, still spans the Via Egnatia at the eastern extremity of the city. Upon each of the bases are very interesting sculptured bas-reliefs in stone, though somewhat injured by fires and the hand of time. The figures represent a Roman triumph. Although the arch goes by the name of Constantine, a Danish antiquarian, who spent a good deal



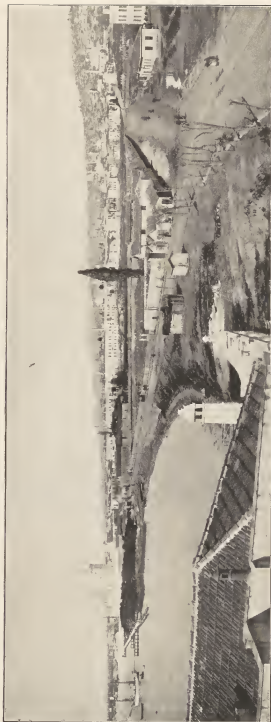
of time in studying it, believes it to belong to the time of the Emperor Galerius (305-311 A.D.).

Between the Rotunda and the sea one may still see the open space called the Hippodrome, where thousands of the city's inhabitants were massacred by order of Theodosius the Great, who in consequence was not allowed by Ambrose of Milan to partake of the communion for eight months.

#### ITS HISTORY.

Salonica is still called Thessalonica by the Greeks. Its history, which is of surpassing interest to the scholar and the Christian, seems to reach back into the dim ages of mythology. Opposite the city, and across its beautiful bay, rises among the clouds the majestic Olympus, the fabled home of the gods. Of the city under its earliest names of Emathia, Holia, and Therma very little is known. Cassander, the husband of the sister of Alexander the Great, is said to have rebuilt and beautified Therma and to have changed its name to Thessalonica, that of his wife. We have time for only a hint as to the history of the city.

Xerxes encamped here with his great army on



CITY AND HARBOR OF SALONICA.

his way to Greece. The great orator Cicero spent some time in banishment here, and some of his letters were dated from this place. Anthony and Octavius rested here after the battle of Philippi and made the place a "free city." But to the Christian other memories are more precious than these. Here the great missionary Paul walked, preached, and founded a Christian church. Twelve feet below the present street at the Arch of Constantine was found the marble pavement of the very same street upon which, doubtless, the apostle walked. His repeated visits to the city, together with his sufferings here for Christ's sake, entitle it to the name of the Apostolic City. The important work which the Christians of that Apostolic church wrought in this whole district is understood by what Paul says of them in 1 Thess. 1:7, 8: "So that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia. For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad." All through the Christian ages this city has held a commanding position with reference to the Christianity of the whole district of Macedonia. One of its archbishops, Eustathius, was reputed to be the most learned man of his age (twelfth century).

From a missionary point of view the city is of special interest to us in our work for the Bulgarians, in the fact that it was the birthplace of the two great Slavic missionaries, Cyril and Methodius. These two gifted brothers gave up their lives to missionary work among the Bulgarians and other Slavs, especially the Moravians. They were the authors of the Slavic translation of the Scriptures (ninth century), and Cyril gave his name to the alphabet which is now used by Russians, Servians, and Bulgarians, which is called the Cyrillic (or Kyrillic). These two brothers are to-day the patron saints of literature and education among the Bulgarians. They are supposed to have led the king of the Bulgarians to the Christian faith about 865 A.D., and afterwards to have worked among the Moravians.

#### THE AMERICAN BOARD'S MISSION.

Salonica was visited by Dr. William G. Schauffler from Constantinople in 1847, and it became a station of the American Board's Mission to the Jews in 1849. Messrs. Maynard and Dodd, with their wives, landed here on April 2 of that year. The station was reinforced by Mr. and Mrs. Parsons in 1850, and by Mr. and Mrs. Morgan in 1852. The missionaries met with a great deal of encouragement not only among the Jews but also among the Greeks and Bulgarians. The death, however, of Mr. Maynard soon after his arrival in September, 1849, and of Mrs. Morgan in September of 1852, and the prostration of Messrs. Parsons and Morgan by intermittent fever, prevented the vigorous prosecution of the work. Notwithstanding all this, tours were made as far north as Sofia. However, in 1856, the station was given up, the work among the Jews having been passed over to the missionaries of the Established Church of Scotland. Work among the Greeks was first passed into the hands of the Southern Presbyterian Church of the United States, but a few years ago its missionaries withdrew, leaving the work in the hands of native Greek brethren, of whom the chief representative is Dr. Kalopothakes, of Athens.

Salonica was reoccupied by the American Board as a station of the European

Turkey Mission, October 9, 1894, Rev. E. B. Haskell and wife, reaching this city at that date. The writer of this article, with his family, joined the station on November 7 of the same year. The reason for occupying the city as an entre for Bulgarian work is the fact that Salonica is the governmental centre of a very large Bulgarian population which can be more easily reached from this city than from any other. Here three railways branch out, one towards Monastir and the west, a second towards Skopia and the north, a third toward Seres and the east, and the latter is expected soon to connect this city with Constantinople.



ARCH OF CONSTANTINE AT SALONICA.

In 1847 the English consul, Mr. Blunt, estimated the population of the city as follows: 30,000 Jews, 20,000 Moslems, 13,000 Greeks, and 1,000 foreigners. The most probable estimate to-day would be: 80,000 Jews, 15,000 Moslems, 15,000 Greeks, 5,000 Bulgarians, and 5,000 of other nationalities, making a total of some 120,000 inhabitants. It will be seen from this it is largely a Jewish city; more people speak Hebrew-Spanish than those who speak any other language. The villagers, however, to the north and west of the city are largely Bulgarian, and already a very interesting work is opening up in the province in connection with the new station. Quite a large work was passed over to this station from Samokov station on the Razlog Plain in the northeast and from Monastir station in the northwest, on the Strumitza and Radovich plains, so that we now have

some sixteen stations, in one of which the work is entirely new and of a most interesting character. We have already received in the province thirty-six new members of the church since the first of January, and quite a number more are waiting for places to be received. We have reason to thank God for this auspicious beginning of our work, and we hope that we may have a place in the love and prayers of the home churches.

*Saturday, Jan. 29, 1895.*